



# News Release

**For immediate release:** October 29, 2020

(20-205)

Media contact: [Lisa Stromme Warren](#), Communications, 360-628-7883

Public inquiries: COVID-19 Hotline, 1-800-525-0127

## **COVID-19 vaccine distribution plan update from the Washington State Department of Health**

**OLYMPIA** – The Washington State Department of Health (DOH) [continues to make progress](#) with our COVID-19 vaccine distribution planning efforts.

This week, DOH is encouraging healthcare providers to prepare to enroll as approved COVID-19 vaccine providers, and we sent an official letter to them with information on how to enroll.

Provider enrollment is the first step in setting up approved COVID-19 vaccine provider locations.

Long-term care facilities can also enroll in a program that will provide COVID-19 vaccine for their residents and staff. On October 16, the White House announced a federal partnership with CVS and Walgreens to administer the COVID-19 vaccine to residents in long-term care facilities when available. These facilities should strongly consider registering for this program. Participation is critical to ensuring that their vulnerable residents are among the first to receive a vaccine when it becomes available.

Also this week, the department received a letter from the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) with a new vaccine preparation timeline and some new planning requests. In this letter, HHS said they may pre-position vaccine supply closer to the administration sites so it will be quicker to get to the community.

HHS has asked all jurisdictions, including Washington state, to plan to be ready by November 15th. DOH wants to emphasize that this is only a “be ready” date. The intent of setting this date is to help all states be ready to use vaccine as quickly as possible after one is federally approved. The department must submit additional planning to HHS by November 2nd to support this new

timeline. Hospitals are the most likely pre-positioning site candidates in Washington, but nothing is final yet.

Also this week, we received a technical review of our [interim COVID-19 vaccine distribution plan](#) from the CDC. We are reviewing the feedback and will have more to share on our [coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccine page](#) next week.

Finally, Gov. Jay Inslee announced this week that Washington is joining other western states to review the safety and efficacy of COVID-19 vaccines once approved by the FDA. This is an added layer of independent expert review that will help build confidence in the vaccine and bring an additional layer of scrutiny to this important process.

The department is committed to continuing the work necessary and when a vaccine is ready, we will be prepared to deploy it in a way that is equitable, safe, and timely for the people of Washington.

The [DOH website](#) is your source for *a healthy dose of information*. [Find us on Facebook](#) and [follow us on Twitter](#). Sign up for the DOH blog, [Public Health Connection](#).

###